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Resting in the Lord is the beginning of all true obedience. If you are not resting then you are struggling, striving, and spending a lot of energy in the attempt to please God. Faith is a simple rest in the absolute assurance of the Lord to do just as He has promised. "He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it." (1 Thess. 5:24) Know this: God keeps His promises. Real faith is resting on His word and on His Person. I cannot repeat this too often. Faith is rest.

Many Christians are asking, "what is the reason there is so much feebleness in the Church?" We cannot ask this question too earnestly, and I trust that God Himself will so impress it upon our hearts that we will say to Him, "It must be changed. Have mercy upon us." But, that prayer and that change cannot come until we begin to see that there is something extremely wrong in the way we have tried to please God. Many are living more after the flesh than the Spirit is. Many people are attempting to please God and overcome sin by the law. God did not give us the Law as a new or alternate way to Him, but to show us the depth of our sinfulness and selfishness, and to bring us to the point of despair of all our own ability to change our condition. In the hour of helplessness, we are driven to receive of God's grace.

Many Christians today are disillusioned and unsatisfied with what they call Christianity. What the Bible promised to them on the authority of God's Word, the inner strength to the holy, the joyous fellowship with God in life and peace in the midst of confusion - simply did not develop as they expected. Many of these people actually burn with a smoldering anger at God because they feel that He has shortchanged them. They never experience or enjoy the promises of God that they find the Bible.

Most of these believers would testify that they once set out on the pathway of faith, with joy in their heart and high hopes of a victory-filled walk with God. Then, at some point in their newfound faith, they discover that their joy is gone and the promises of God seem to disappear. After much struggling and effort, they fail to find the joy they once had. Many at this point just give up and resign themselves to going through life with meaningless religious motions in despair and defeat.

Many who have walked the pathway of faith in God and His promises have faced the same issues of these people. A basic error in understanding the nature of God's promises is the cause of their despair and frustration. When we look at the promises as something that must be accomplished by our will power, we are already being sidetracked into the dead-end street of despair. The truth is that faith does not rest in our ability to do what He promised, but in His ability to make good all He has promised.

This misunderstanding has sinister undertones. It is a slander of God's character suggesting He will not do as He has said. It is a turning of trust to self, certain that we can achieve what God wants independently of God. Many people are seeking to achieve God's commands and promises in their own ability and strength, and this always ends in disaster.

This path is the one that Eve traveled in Eden. The devil did not suggest that Eve become a devil! Instead, He suggested that her action would result in her becoming like God. God commands us "to be ye holy for I am holy" which certainly sounds as if man was to be like God! Can you fault a man for wanting to be like God? The subtle temptation was that they should pursue the course of being like God, but quite independently of God, using their own will power and struggles to achieve what ONLY God can do.

The Pharisees fell into this same error. They dedicated their lives to understanding God's law and its application to life

and ended up, not with righteousness, but with slavery to rules and regulations that they had set up for themselves to keep. They were seeking to follow the letter of the law by their own self-effort and will power. They also were prideful and looked down on others who seemed less dedicated to the law than them.

The Church is full of such misguided religious people even today. They are seeking to achieve the holy lifestyle outlined in the Scripture, but in their own strength. The Christian life is not a massive effort of self-struggling to achieve God's will, but rather the self helplessly resting in His character and faithfulness to do all that He has promised. In this sense, there are only two religions in the world. One is the religion of doing, which takes in every world religion including apostate Christianity. The other is the religion of resting in all that God has done and is doing. The one is a list of rules that the adherents must seek to keep by struggling in order to achieve all that God has promised. The other is the glad announcement of what God had done to bring man to Himself and with it the invitation to partake and say thank you.

Are you living by the law? This way of life only gives strength to every spiritual problem we have. Thinking that by keeping the law and rules we can please God is the fundamental misunderstanding of God's ways. The road to God and the only way of walking in His pleasure has been established from the beginning of the Bible. The way of salvation outlined in Scriptures finds its origin with God alone. He always takes the initiative in saving man. All man can do is respond to His announced salvation with repentance, praise, and thanks.

Man in his sinful state hates the God who will only deal with him in grace. Romans 8:7 describes man as being hostile to God. The reason for his antagonism is that the grace of God faces man with the fact that he can do nothing to merit God's gifts. Man is the helpless recipient of all of God's blessings, not because of who he is or what he may have done, but because of who God is. This brings everyone to the same level with no one being able to boast that he deserves the gifts of God.

When people see the Law, they grasp at it as an opportunity to get out of the humiliating position grace had placed them into. Many consider the Ten Commandments as rules that they must keep to show God that they are not as bad as He says they are! By keeping the rules, they can prove to God that they are capable of improvement and of pleasing Him. It takes NO faith or grace to live by the law. Living by the law is done by a person's self-effort of responding to commandments that they think they must keep in order to live in harmony with God. This is completely wrong. We can ONLY respond in faith to His gift of grace!

If you ever tried to live by the law or rules, you have found only complete failure and despair. You may have dedicated yourself to pleasing God, but things have only got worse. The more you have tried to become better, the worse you become. All your anger, pride, lust, and impatience have only received new strength and life! You may have also discovered more negative characteristics about yourself, then you were aware of before. You may even have a cry of despair and say something like, "Why doesn't God help me? The more I try to please Him the less He cares to help me!"

If you are at this point of total despair of the ability of self, then get ready for the Holy Spirit to turn on the lights. He will show you that Christ is the whole and only answer, not only to your past, but also to your present struggling self. Salvation is not merely Christ dying to save us from our past guilt, but Christ is alive and by His Spirit actually living within us. This coming within of the Spirit of Christ occurs at the new birth. Romans 8:9 points out that if we do not have His Spirit we do not belong to Him. However, most of us go through endless miseries, drawing upon our self-strength before we realize that the whole of the Christian life is not us struggling, but Christ simply living His life in us and as us.

Here is a staggering fact that can throw away everything you may have ever believed. The question, "What shall a man do to please God?" is now answered, not with rules and neat formulas, but with the amazing words, ABSOLUTELY NOTHING! You are to reject all your efforts to improve and make yourself respectable before God and rest in the One who is the life within. Such a revelation is devastating because it shows that all you have called spiritual life was actually spiritual death, the dead struggles of self proving again and again its inability to live a life pleasing to God. True spiritual life is not what I am doing for God, but Christ being Himself in me.

The revelation of God's grace demands a new way of looking and thinking about life. The way of the Law is a life of promises, calling upon self to do and be better, a way characterized by formulas, methods and the how-tos of cold principles, all working to achieve a lifestyle that will allegedly please God. Grace shows us that Christ has done all and is the all of life. It leaves man to accept the fact he is helpless and that God made him that way.

We can no longer make ridiculous promises to God, promising that we will make more determined efforts to be like Jesus. We can no longer search after methods that depend on self-effort and self-discipline to achieve the Christian life. The

helpless cannot draw from their own resources for they have none! We must see the Christian life, step by step, as Christ living within us by His Spirit. When describing the believer's lifestyle, Paul describes it as the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). It is the believer living, but the Spirit of Christ living within his life as his true new life.

Can you, right now see the despair and death of attempting to live your life by law and rules? Can you see the total rest that grace brings by knowing that you can have the Life of Christ in you? In seeing the way of rest in Christ, you can believe this truth right now and submit to it with a simple prayer, such as, "I see I have been wrong, I have tried to please you by my own self effort. I now realize I cannot do anything except to take you at your word and rest in your truth. I recognize You, Christ, to be my everything; that You are joined in one Spirit, a perfect unit; that for me to live is simply You living in me. You are my life, my all. I recognize and rest in this fact now. Amen."

It may take a while for you to live in the fact that you are totally helpless and Christ is your only strength. At first, you may not feel any different. Don't worry! It is not a wiping out of all feeling and negative emotion, but a new attitude toward them. Just remember the message of God's grace; that you are helpless; Christ is your life and the Gospel is not helplessness trying to be like Christ, but Christ living His own life in your helplessness.

Biblical faith looks outside of itself to the God who made the promises. It rests solely on the character of God and the covenant oath that He has sworn. Faith is committing one's whole person, past, present, and future to the faithfulness of God, knowing that He cannot deny Himself. Faith is totally absorbed with its object, the God of covenant. The believer's faith is as sure as the faithfulness of the One he or she rests in.

We live in a world filled with definitions of faith given to us by the self-help and positive thinking gurus, by New Age, and by witchcraft. Many of these definitions have found their way into the Christian media and greatly affected the way Christians understand what faith is. Sincere believers caught in this deception seek to bring to pass the promise of God with a pseudo faith born of the flesh that is both futile and wreaks havoc in the believers' walk with God.

Let us quickly look at what Biblical faith is not:

Faith is not an energy that resides within the believer. It is not a power that when built up and focused the believer has the ability to make things happen, even to the point of forcing God's hand. Faith is not a work, a struggle to arrive at a state of mind where the hoped for blessing can be seen or felt as being possessed. Thousands of believers look upon the acquisition of faith as a mental struggle, or the intense focusing of thoughts on a desired object or promise in order to bring it into being. This is a work of the flesh, arising from the creature mind and has nothing to do with the faith the Bible speaks of which is a rest in God.

Others understand faith as something found in the words of a promise in Scripture. They repeat the words of a promise as if by continually repeating the words, they will cause the desired blessing to become a reality in their lives. This reduces the holy words of Scripture to the level of a magic spell in which they try to manipulate God into doing what He has said.

The Christian understanding of faith radically parts company with witchcraft, New Age, positive thinking, and self-help. All of these have one thing in common. They use words as a formula to gain a desired end. The faith of the Christian has nothing to do with formulas or spells, but it is rooted in the relationship with God that has been established by covenant.

Faith is not directed at the words of a promise but rests in the One who made the promise. The Bible knows nothing about faith being a formula that we can use to extract something from God. Faith is our trust response to the revelation God has given us of Himself. Faith cannot be merely a matter of one's mind. We hold much as true in our mind but we never commit ourselves to it. We are more than mind and faith must include the whole person. Faith may include intense feelings but faith is far more than feeling. It is possible to have overwhelming feelings while we are in an emotionally charged meeting, but we can get up the next morning and live as if nothing ever happened.

Faith is moving our whole person to rest in Christ and what He has accomplished for us and that must be a movement of spirit, mind, emotion, and body. We can liken faith to the eye of the spirit. The physical eye is not aware of itself unless something is wrong. The eye functions by seeing and recording an object. If it becomes self-conscious and looks at itself to see how good of an eye it is, then it ceases to function as an eye. Faith is not self-conscious, morbidly checking on itself to gauge its strength, but faith is continually looking at its object - God revealed in the Lord Jesus.

We do not find Biblical faith within us, either as a natural energy or as a labor, but in beholding and responding to His faith

thfulness and to His covenant oath. We trust in His character, that what He says, He will do. Faith is a responsive act of trust in a word from God. Faith comes from a revelation of the love and faithfulness of God specifically revealed in Jesus who is the covenant. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith.

"...looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith..." (Hebrews 12:2)

"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17)

The Word of God is more than the words written on the pages of our Bible. The Word of God ultimately is Jesus, the Son of God who became flesh and lived among us. (John 1:1-14) He is the final out speaking of God to us.

Faith is a relationship with Him. It is submission and obedience to Him, and so we read of "the obedience of faith". Faith is not a mental marathon with the goal of bringing to pass our agenda using a formula, even if it is fashioned out of the words of Scripture. Faith never forces the hand of God, but submits to Him responding to His covenant words knowing that He who promised is faithful to perform them. Faith is trust in God, in who He is and in what He has done. Arising from that trust, we believe that He will be faithful and do as He has said.

When God made covenant with Abraham, the Bible said, "And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness". (Genesis 15:6) First, he believed the Lord, and then he believed the words of the promise made by the One he considered faithful. The word 'believe' in this Scripture means 'to commit oneself to rest in'. In that act of commitment to who God was and what He would do, God accepted Abraham as righteous.

We speak a lot about Abraham's faith in the birth of Isaac, but what about Sarah? God renewed her old body to bear a child! This was not by gritting her teeth to make it happen but by faith in His faithfulness:

The fact that the Gospel contains the covenant that is based solely on the oath of God separates Christianity from every other religion on earth. Until we see this, our Gospel will, in fact, not be Good News but a distortion of the truth; jagged rocks on which the believer sooner or later wrecks his or her life.

One does not approach the Christian life with gritted teeth, strong determination, and enough will power to obey God and show Him our love for Him. We will find the sincere people who try to do this dedicating their lives to God on a regular basis in an effort to summon the ultimate strength from their flesh to live the life of Jesus. They make promises they can never keep and, eventually, they will burn out, walking away from the church in despair of ever being good enough. They see the Christian life based on their oath, instead of resting in the oath of God.

Nor is the Christian life a shared effort between God and the believer. Thousands set out to live the Christian life with promises and dedications while calling on God to help them. God does not lend a hand to help their efforts to achieve the impossible. They are utterly helpless and God alone brings to pass the life described in the covenant, based on His oath.

Others clearly do not expect to live the Christian life! Such persons would actually describe the Christian life in terms of wallowing in their guilt and shame and their impotency to live it! They call to God for mercy like a beggar asking for a quarter. They continually cry to God for His help and salvation without any genuine expectancy of receiving it, for they know nothing about the oath of God where He commits Himself to answer our cry. Some of them would be shocked and offended if God did answer, for they would feel deprived of the miserable cry for mercy that they call their Christian life!

For God to swear by Himself that He will fulfill the promises of the covenant is shocking; it means that if He did not perform the terms of the covenant, then He would cease to be and all creation would fall into nothingness. His spoken word would be enough, for He is the God who cannot lie; but in order for us to have an understanding of His absolute, unchangeable purpose, He added to His word a covenant oath. God gives us a covenant oath by which we may never doubt that He will fulfill every word of the covenant promises to all who call upon Him.

"For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil. (Hebrews 6:16-19)

It is in the oath of God that we discover the uniqueness of the Gospel. The key words of the Gospel are not "struggle", "try and try harder" but "surrender to", "yield to", "rest in and believe on the Lord Jesus, who is the covenant". All these words indicate that we have come to the end of our struggling and failing attempts to live a godly life and we have come to stake our hope on who He is, and what He has promised and achieved.

God not only made this covenant but He also sealed it with His oath that guarantees the covenant. God swears by Himself that He is the guarantee both of the human and divine side, that the covenant will be kept. This is the absolute certainty that we have of the covenant, it is made and guaranteed by God. If the covenant depended upon our oath or faithfulness for its fulfillment, then we would have broken it within hours of making it. It is sworn to by God and it is as sure and unchangeable as God is. He is incapable of making a promise that He cannot perform for every word He says is the perfect expression of who He is. His word is in complete accord with reality; His word and deed are one.

Please examine this covenant promise.

"But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord' for they all shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (Jeremiah 31:33,34)

Read the words over again. "I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts". This verse promises that the law will no longer be outside of you, making demands that you can never meet, and then condemning you when you inevitably fail. This should excite you as nothing in the Bible ever has before.

Look again the first verse, "I will be their God, and they shall be My people". You can know Him as "your" God and for Him to include you as being part of the company who uniquely belongs to Him should bring an unspeakable yearning in your heart. Do you realize that God wants to be "your" God? He wants you to be His special child?

Yes, you can really know the Lord. Many people who call themselves Christians do not really know Him at all. They may know facts and doctrine about Him, but they lack a firsthand relationship with Him. Many just have rules to live by that are associated with being a Christian.

Look at the last phrase, "For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more". This almost seems too good to be true. God says that He will not remember your sins any more! WOW!! Here is a life where there is no sense of guilt and shame before the God who knows every thought that passes through your mind, every word on your tongue and every act that you do. These are incredible words! Do you realize that God is making a promise that covers all of life? As you reread this promise, you will find that you do not have to promise God anything. The passage makes it clear that God is the sole promise keeper, all man can do is receive. This verse tells you what God will do, not that you should try to achieve.

Well if that is not enough to bring joy and hope to you, please read and consider this covenant promise.

"Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them." (Ezekiel 36:25-27)

Here God says that He will give us a NEW heart and a NEW Spirit and cause us to walk in His statutes. WOW AGAIN!! Here is the true fulfillment of the Law. God states that He will give us a heart and Spirit that WILL obey him.

These promises, bound to fulfillment by the oath of God, cover every cry of the hearts of human beings in their state of sin and spiritual darkness. They guarantee that God will:

- . Remove his guilt and shame, freeing him from the authority of sin and death.
- . Give him the motive, desire, and enabling power to live in love for God and his neighbor.
- . Cause him to belong to Him, bringing him into the Covenant Family of God.
- . Free him from bondage to Satan and all the powers of darkness.
- . Grant him the knowledge that God is with him, blessing him and all he does.

. Bring him into union with Himself, placing His Spirit within him.

Have you ever heard or really considered this truth before? Did you know that it is really possible to please God and walk in His commandments? Don't you want the reality of this truth in your life more than anything you have ever wanted before?

I hope you are asking, "How do I get this? What do I have to do? Is there a price to pay or a dedication to make in order to get this from the Lord? What must I do in order to receive such a life?" Repeatedly read these passages over to see what God requires.

You will find NOTHING! Instead, what should stand out to you are the repeated words of "I will" throughout these passages. These verses clearly state that it is God's intention to do these things and there is no price tag for you to pay at all. This is the secret of true faith. Faith does not originate in you making promises with ever-increasing intensity and determination, promises that you have no hope of ever keeping. Nor is it in your making vows and rededications to be a better Christian for Him. Rather it is in your simply saying "thank you Lord for the promises that you have made", and submit to His intention for you. This could be your radical turning point in your life. No longer is your starting point yourself but God!! Your part is not to say, "I promise to try harder" but to respond to Him and say, "Yes! Do in me even as You have said".

You must throw off all trust in your self-effort and the keeping of endless rules so that you might live out the Spirit of Christ within you. Here is God's word to you today: "Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)

This, all by itself, can be more difficult than repenting of sin! Hebrews 9:14 speaks about cleansing, or repenting of "dead works," i.e. works that originate in self-efforts. It seems so right to sincerely try to please God, and so secure to be snug in the strait jacket of rules! Only as we helplessly rest in what God has done for us, and is doing within us right now, will we know the joy of the Lord and experience His power manifested in our lives to make good all He has said.

What is your experience? Have you tried to be more like Jesus by the struggles of self-effort that only produces failure and despair? Have you exerted your will power to be like Jesus? Do you have rules that you think that you must keep to be a successful Christian? Do you keep rededicating yourself to try harder and to keep rules so you can please God? Have you found that all your self-effort accomplishes nothing? In fact, it even drives you further from the Lord.

Do you make promises to God? Do you vow that you will struggle and fight against sin. Do you vow that you will avoid all temptations, rise early to pray and read the Bible, and witness to at least one person every day? If you have made these promises, you may have a smug feeling that you are somehow a better Christian than others are who haven't made such extravagant promises to Him. Have you tried to prove to God that you loved Him by perfectly keeping every promise you have made? Have you ever thought that if you kept your vows, you would come closer to God?

If you have, then you have inevitably broken one or more of the promises that you made to God so sincerely. I am sure that you may have been totally disgusted with yourself to the point of vowing to try even harder. However, even with this new effort you have failed to keep all the vows that you just made. Each day only brings more failure, and every so often, you come before God with feelings of contrition to make more promises that you swear with all the sincerity of your being. Even with all your devotion and honest struggles you fail to make the Scriptures come to pass in your life.

Your "Christian life" is neither joyful nor full of victory. In fact, it is just plain miserable. The joy of the Lord is a mirage in your desert of frustration and despair. You are a child of the Spirit, married to the slavery of rules and regulations that promise to bring about the lifestyle of holy joy that you see in the Bible. To hear this Good News can be shocking to many, for it means that the regulations of a church and our self imposed rules are not making us holy after all, but instead, they are the shackles of slavery.

Now re-read the covenant promises of God again and pray something like this, "God, I promise You that I will make no more promises to You! I rest on the promises You have made and trust You to keep them." Then you will not feel any pride, but you will be helpless in your dependence on God. You can now move forward in life knowing that your honor is not at stake, but His honor, and He is able to do all He has said. WOW!!! What rest.

If you just prayed a prayer like this, then you are NOW FREE from human struggle. You are now on the main highway o

f faith, which is resting helplessly in God expecting Him to do all that He has promised. If you ever slip back into self-effort, and you realize it, just repent and laugh at yourself for being so foolish. Then, return at once to rest in God.

In covenant oath, God has taken it upon Himself to conform our entire person to the image of the Lord Jesus, to write His law upon our hearts. Most of us, at least, act as if this job is entirely on our shoulders. God must write the Law on our hearts and minds. God must place His Spirit within us and cause us to walk in His ways. We lay our weakness and the pull of our flesh before Him and clearly say that it is God's work to draw us into His ways. We live out our entire Christian life on the sure foundation of His faithfulness to His covenant word, that He will do, in us, what He set out to do.

Understanding the oath of God takes all of the pressure and tension out of life, and introduces us into the rest of God. The whole burden of bringing the promises of the covenant to pass in our lives is on God. Instead of laboring to exhaustion trying to please God, we live in the rest of faith in His faithfulness.

Living, relying on His oath, is the first step in living the Christian life. It is also the energy behind every step; we never graduate from that state of helpless dependence on Him. We will never be able (and God never intended that we would be able) to achieve the promises of the covenant in our own strength or willpower. We are totally helpless to bring them to pass. We cannot make them happen by resolve, dedication, or twelve step programs. We invoke the God who has made a covenant, swearing by Himself, to achieve all of this in our lifetime. We thank Him for His mercy in giving us the covenant but now call upon His faithfulness to keep it.

So, we do not attempt to cleanse ourselves, but we lay before Him, the case of our sins and weaknesses, our idols and our filthiness and call on Him to do what we never can achieve by our promises - wash us and cleanse us from it all. Our feelings about our salvation ride a roller coaster as temptations and trials whirl about us. The anchor that holds us steady is not faith in our willpower or the constancy of our feelings but His faithfulness by which He has promised to save and cleanse us.

God does the work according to His promise when we place our trust and rest in His word. By resting in His word, we give ourselves in complete and eternal abandonment, to Him. By resting, we give ourselves to Him without reservation and we take our hands off ourselves forever. This covers our entire being, and the acceptance of all future light that God gives us as we grow in grace and become closer and more like Him. Once we have given ourselves to Him by resting in His word, we have completed our side of the covenant. Now He fulfills His side of the covenant and He does the work. It is that simple!

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification". (1 Thess 4:3)

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matthew. 5:48)

"But as he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, be ye holy; for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15-16)

Faith is not a struggle to believe. Faith is not holding on to a thread. Faith is a REST in the Lord and in His Word. He said, "If you will do this, I will do this". If you have already placed your trust in Him, then you KNOW you have done your part. "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us, and if we know He hears us, whatsoever we ask, WE KNOW that WE HAVE the petitions we desired of Him." (1 John 5:14-15)

He does the work according to His covenant. He is bound by the covenant to perform the work. When you pray according to His will, He has already done His work in response. All that you need now is to rest on His word with full assurance of faith. When you are rest on His word, immediately you will receive the witness of the Holy Spirit, which is peace.

Faith is a simple rest in the absolute assurance of the Lord to do as He has promised. Faithful is He who called you who also will do it. This rest in God is the doorway to a new state of grace. If you have prayed, then you have taken the first step into the entrance into a whole new condition. A condition as radically different from the justified life as the justified life is from the old sinful life when we become new creatures in Christ. Isn't it absolutely glorious that the Lord gives us a full salvation from all sin: forgiveness for all our guilty acts, and cleansing from all our warped old nature.

Many Christians, do not know what they should do to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. They overlook the fact that "this is the victory that overcomes the world, even your faith," that it is with "the shield of faith" that they are able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one." They ask, why am I overcome by sin? Why can I not get above its power

? Why am I the slave of my appetites and lusts? They search all around for the cause of all this spiritual wretchedness and death. The result of this they spend years in running around and around getting nowhere.

Instead of at once resting in faith which would purify their hearts, they are engaged in self efforts and struggles. They search for the reason why they sin. They ask and search hard for the cause. It should be clear that the foundation of all our wickedness is in the corruption of our nature, in the wickedness of our heart, and in the strength of our evil inclinations and habits. But all this only brings us back to the real question again. How is this corrupt nature, this wickedness, and these sinful habits to be overcome? The ONLY answer to this is by faith alone. No works of law have the least tendency to overcome our sins, in fact they only further confirm us in self-righteousness and unbelief.

Now you should know why the church is weak and feeble. Many overlook the necessity of faith and simple trust, which alone can produce acceptable obedience to God. So many in the church are engaged in efforts to obtain faith by works, instead of first exercising that faith which will birth within them a clean heart. In this way they seek in vain to please God. How common is it to see persons full of bustle and outward efforts and works, -fasting and praying, giving and doing, and struggling. Even with all this activity they do have the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against which there is no law. They have not, after all, crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. They do not live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit. They do not, in their own experience, realize the truth of that saying, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed and resting on You: because he trusts in You." Without that trust they cannot have peace; and cannot be obedient.

Let me give you one more example of rest. When the word and promise came to Mary that she would be the mother of God's Child, the Savior of the world, what could she really do to bring this word to pass? She could do nothing by her flesh, by her own efforts, or in her strength to bring this MIRACLE about. She was totally helpless!!!! All she could do is to take God at His word and rest in it. She said, "let it be done unto me according to your word." Now she had peace knowing that it would just be a matter of time before the child was born.

Well you also can do nothing by your flesh, your own efforts, or strength to ever please God or to have any victory over sin. You also need a MIRACLE just like she did. Are you NOW ready to give up all self-effort and take God at His word by resting in HIS WORD? God's word is a seed, once you put your trust in it and the Seed Giver you become pregnant. At first you may have no evidence of His truth working in you but as you rest in Him you know that it is just a matter of time before the seed is fully birthed in you.

Are you now ready to turn from trusting in your self and all your efforts to trusting in the Lord and His Word? You can do it NOW! NO WAITING IS REQUIRED! Once you place your trust in Him you will have peace knowing that God will, in His own time, and in His own way, come suddenly to you and fill you with Himself. Just submit your total self to His word to do in you as He said. Do not look at your own ability to trust Him but on HIS ability to birth His word in you and give you HIS LIFE in a new a real way!!! Take hold, then, on the simple promise of God. Take God at his word. Believe that he means just what he says and this will at once bring you into the victory which you desire.

"By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised." (Hebrews 11:11) Just judge and consider God Faithful and rest in His word. It is that easy.

Always remember for every command of God there is a promise from God that, if received, will fulfill that command. Or another way to put it is, what the law requires, God's grace freely makes available by faith. If you are in darkness, despair and discouraged, it probably is because of your sin of unbelief. You are still seeking salvation and freedom from sin by works of law. Immediately exercise faith upon the Son of God. It is the first and the only thing you can do to rest your feet upon the rock, and it will immediately put a new song into your mouth. Faith will INSTANTLY make you holy without any preparation. When you see the duties of the law, be sure to find the promise and grace of God that will enable you to fulfill it. It is IMPOSSIBLE to obey the law without first receiving the promise. Take that promise, and word of God and believe it. BELIEVE GOD NOW! TAKE HIM AT HIS WORD!

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/2/5 8:02

Are you kidding me?

This is just truly remarkable!
Did you write this, brother/sister?

I cannot begin to tell you how much this has begun to develop within me in the last couple of months. And the fact is I do n't even really know what brought it about. It wasn't mentally ... 'discovered'. Maybe it was just finally coming to a point where all the frustrations and endless striving brought about the sense of, "what does it matter?" Meaning what does it matter to the Lord? Because if doesn't, then what on earth am I doing?

I am not even half way through here, but had to stop and say...

PLEASE READ THIS

This could revolutionize some lives.
Much, much thanks.

Edit: 'Ezekiel' I believe was intended there...
an interesting typo...

amen and amen, on: 2005/2/5 14:27

powerful words! I cut and pasted that, will print it up to read yet again, and I send it off to my brother and sister who are in Indonesia.

Thank you, and God bless you.

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE, on: 2005/8/17 15:55

I wanted to bring this precious word from bro freed to the fore again, and prayerfully urge all my brothers and sisters to FEAST upon these truths. This single bit of writing opened up so much for me. Praise God!! Thank You Jesus!

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/17 16:37

Resting on the faithfulness of Christ our Lord,
Resting on the fulness of His own sure word;
Resting on His wisdom, on His love and power,
Resting on His covenant from hour to hour.

Resting 'neath His guiding hand for untracked days,
Resting 'neath His shadow from the noontide rays.
Resting at the eventide beneath His wing,
In the fair pavilion of our Saviour King.

Resting in the fortress while the foe is nigh,
Resting in the lifeboat while the waves roll high;
Resting in His chariot for the swift glad race,
Resting, always resting, in His boundless grace.

Resting in the pastures, and beneath the Rock,
Resting by the waters where He leads His flock;
Resting, while we listen at His glorious feet,
Resting in His arms of love - oh, rest complete!

Resting and believing, let us onward press,
Resting on Himself, "the Lord our Righteousness!"

General Topics :: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE

Resting and rejoicing , let His saved ones sing -
"Glory, glory, glory be to Christ our King!"

Francis Ridley Havergal

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE - posted by bluinios, on: 2005/8/17 17:06

"WOW" Amen, missing everyone.

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE, on: 2005/9/1 18:47

Quote:
-----Many Christians, do not know what they should do to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. They overlook the fact that "this is the victory that overcomes the world, even your faith" (1 John 5:4), that it is with "the shield of faith" that they are able "to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one" (Eph 6:16). They ask, why am I overcome by sin? Why can I not get above its power? Why am I the slave of my appetites and lusts? They search all around for the cause of all this spiritual wretchedness and death. The result of this they spend years in running around and around getting nowhere.

Instead of **at once resting in faith which would purify their hearts**

This is a truth to be embraced with single-mindedness.

(Suggest: use Edit menu, Find (on this page) to locate paragraph.)

My dear sister Dorcas, on: 2005/9/1 19:22

this paper has blessed me so so tremendously, fore it has guided me out of the thickets of religiosity.

Glory!!

Re: My dear sister Dorcas - posted by baruch_48, on: 2005/9/2 7:07

Power-packed article :)

These statements below stood out to me:

Quote:
-----Man is the helpless recipient of all of God's blessings

When people see the Law, they grasp at it as an opportunity to get out of the humiliating position grace had placed them into.

Nor is the Christian life a shared effort between God and the believer.

True spiritual life is not what I am doing for God, but Christ being Himself in me.

a lot of believers who are 'pressing in' with Christ, and not satisfied with status-quo-christianity ... are prey, I believe, to falling from this Grace - and turning back to the laws of self-effort & performance

-- in their zeal to please God

yet, I've met believers who could "amen" to every point in the article ... and yet, I find them to be lax .. and not really "pressing on" in this Grace that saves us

the Body is in need of balance - with having the desire to press in to the higher calling ... knowing Him in the fellowship of His sufferings

&

realizing that this is only accomplished through resting in that same Grace that saved us (before we were 'zealous')

Re: - posted by jeremyhulsey (), on: 2005/9/2 8:53

'Mid toil and tribulation,
and tumult of her war,
she waits the consumation
of peace forever more;
till with the vision glorious,
her longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious
shall be the church at rest

~Samuel J stone~

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE, on: 2005/9/3 6:21

Quote:

-----**For God to swear by Himself** that He will fulfill the promises of the covenant **is shocking**; it means that if He did not perform the terms of the covenant, then He would cease to be and all creation would fall into nothingness. His spoken word would be enough, for He is the God who cannot lie; but in order for us to have an understanding of His absolute, unchangeable purpose, He added to His word a covenant oath. God gives us a covenant oath by which we may never doubt that He will fulfill every word of the covenant promises to all who call upon Him.

"For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: **That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul**, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil." (Hebrews 6:16-19)

It is in the oath of God that we discover the uniqueness of the Gospel. The key words of the Gospel are not "struggle", "try and try harder" but "surrender to", "yield to", "rest in and believe on the Lord Jesus, who is the covenant". All these words indicate that we have come to the end of our struggling and failing attempts to live a godly life and **we have come to stake our hope on who He is**, and what He has promised and achieved.

God not only made this covenant but He also sealed it with His oath that guarantees the covenant. God swears by Himself that He is the guarantee both of the human and divine side, that the covenant will be kept. This is the absolute certainty that we have of the covenant, it is made and guaranteed by God. If the covenant depended upon our oath or faithfulness for its fulfillment, then we would have broken it within hours of making it. It is sworn to by God and it is as sure and unchangeable as God is. **He is incapable of making a promise that He cannot perform for every word He says is the perfect expression of who He is. His word is in complete accord with reality; His word and deed are one.**

This explanation of the 'two immutable things' - God's inability to lie and His taking of an oath (almost against Himself) has never been better explained to my understanding. Thank you, freed. And yet I have read and heard that chunk of Hebrews many times, and the attempts made to explain it...

Remarkable how the Spirit picks one unsuspected moment to float meaning into our conscious understanding. Praise the Lord that He does.

Re: Stone's hymn - posted by baruch_48, on: 2005/9/7 13:10

Hi Hulsey,

I have no doubt this Samuel Stone fellow was undoubtedly some strong and serious Christian of yester-year ... but these words of his hymn ~

'Mid toil and tribulation,
and tumult of her war,
she waits the consumation
of peace forever more;
till with the vision glorious,
her longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious
shall be the church at rest'

is reflective of a lack of understanding the Sabbath Rest of Hebrews 4 - it seems

implicit in the hymn is that only when the race is over, and there is the consumation, that we the Church find rest

the article by freedd is to the contrary, and so are the Scriptures

in fact, if we're not resting IN Jesus ... we won't finish the race in a glorious manner

- we'll be striving in our own energy, and likely a burn-out (which the Lord can take and use)

there's a great need for balance in understanding that the great dynamic of "pressing in" and pressing onward .. upward --- is found in Rest-ing (in Christ - who is our Power to press on - Col. 1:29 / Eph 1:19)

as I said in my post earlier on this thread ... it seems saints either don't press in, because they think that resting means they don't have to ... or at the other end of this spectrum ... those that exuberantly desire to "press on" don't want **to rest in His energy to press on**

either is disobedience

Yet He is full of grace

bro baruch

Re: - posted by rocklife (), on: 2005/9/8 8:17

There is a right balance of work and rest.

One of His Truths on this subject is found in the 10 commandments, the ones God wrote in stone with His finger and spoke with His voice to a multitude, and Jesus has come to fulfill, magnify, make it bigger and honorable.

The starting point is His Holy Law, the 10 commandments. And God's balance of rest and work, before written in stone with His finger, is also seen in the week of creation.

Yes, there is spiritual rest, but there is also the need of work. The balance needs to be seen, or else rest will just turn into laziness, idleness. The harvest is plentiful, the workers are few.

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE, on: 2008/3/7 18:37

From time to time when legalism, law, works and salvation are being discussed across the forums, I remember this excellent sample of Ernest O'Neill's work.

I hope those who haven't read it before, may be blessed.

Re:, on: 2008/3/8 0:00

Thanks dorcas,

I've never read it. If I would of read this a year ago I would of just put it off as "some heresy". But since i've reaches that point to where theres nothing else but Christ and can go no further, these type readings make since. Until were actually able to look through eyes of faith, it just seems like a powerless word. I remember thinking, What is faith? What is the power of faith? Why do so many people talk about faith? Now I know why, and I wish everyone could know.

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2008/3/8 0:17

Hi Linn,

Thanks for bringing this O'Neill article up again, which I read with great appreciation.

The following two paragraphs really impacted me:

Quote:

"It is in the oath of God that we discover the uniqueness of the Gospel. The key words of the Gospel are not "struggle", "try and try harder" but "surrender to", "yield to", "rest in and believe on **the Lord Jesus, who is the covenant**". All these words indicate that we have come to the end of our struggling and failing attempts to live a godly life and we have come to stake our hope on who He is, and what He has promised and achieved."

"God not only made this covenant but He also sealed it with His oath that guarantees the covenant. God swears by Himself that, **He is the guarantee both of the human and the divine side** that the covenant will kept. This is the absolute certainty that we have of the covenant, it is made and guaranteed by God. If the covenant depended upon our oath or faithfulness for its fulfillment, then we would have broken it within hours of making it. It is sworn to by God and it is as sure and unchangeable as God is. He is incapable of making a promise that He cannot perform for every word He says is the perfect expression of who He is. His word is in complete accord with reality; His word and deed are one."

End of Quote

That is so awesome to me. What good and comforting words, that He Himself undertakes to fulfill both the Divine and the human side (our side) of the Covenant! (Which is foreshadowed in Gen. Ch. 15, where God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Abram, while He Himself alone "walked between the pieces.")

...And this about the Lord Jesus Himself being the Covenant brought to mind the question put by some on the Sabbath threads, asking where it could be shown that Christ is Himself our Sabbath, as many of us have maintained.

Well, right here.

He is Himself our WHOLE COVENANT. That is to say, it is HE HIMSELF who is the covenant God has made with us.

"I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and give thee **for a covenant of the people**, for a light of the Gentiles..." (Isa. 42.6).

"Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee, and I will preserve thee, and **give thee for a covenant of the people**..." (Isa. 49.8).

And this as well:

"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: **and his rest shall be glorious**" (Isa. 11.10).

What tremendous things!

Thanks again,
AD

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE, on: 2008/3/8 12:38

Bump....

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2008/3/8 23:07

Quote:
-----From time to time when legalism, law, works and salvation are being discussed across the forums, I remember this excellent sample of Ernest O'Neill's work. I hope those who haven't read it before, may be blessed.

Blessed indeed! Thank you sister for bringing this to our attention. I must have missed it back when it was originally posted. This is outstanding.

In Christ,

Ron

Not O'Neill, on: 2008/3/9 7:52

This was not O'Neill and I never said it was.

I need to set the record straight.

I assembled this article from many different sources and wrote some of it myself.

O'Neill was not even one of the sources I used for this.

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE, on: 2008/3/9 8:14

freesd said

Quote:
-----This was not O'Neill and I never said it was.

I need to set the record straight.

I assembled this article from many different sources and wrote some of it myself.

O'Neill was not even one of the sources I used for this.

'I need to set the record straight.'

Truly, I made the *assumption* it had come from O'Neill because of your reticence towards taking credit, and soon afterwards the appearance of O'Neill's testimony.

Please accept my apologies, freesd, and everyone.

It is, nevertheless, as InTheLight said

Quote:

-----'Blessed indeed!' and 'outstanding'.

Thank you.

Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2008/3/9 11:49

Quote:

dorcias wrote:

freecd said

This was not O'Neill and I never said it was.

Please accept my apologies, freecd, and everyone.

Granted, Dorcas.

I continue to be blessed by this article, Freecd. Thank you.

AD

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE, on: 2008/3/10 9:54

I think this article is excellent!

If anyone would like to read something else like this article, there is a marvelous little book by T. Austin Sparks called "The School of Christ".

Personally, it is probably my favorite book.

Re:, on: 2008/3/12 9:01

Bump...

I just think as many people as possible should have the opportunity to read this....over and over again.

Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2008/3/14 22:02

Quote:

Mahoney wrote:

I think this article is excellent!

If anyone would like to read something else like this article, there is a marvelous little book by T. Austin Sparks called "The School of Christ".

Personally, it is probably my favorite book.

I'm with you, Mahoney, regarding this article.

And as to Austin-Sparks' book, The School of Christ, it's too hard for me to pick a book as my favourite, since I have a number of them.

But this one is certainly one of them.

What are we learning in our Christian walk?

General Topics :: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE

Are we learning Christ? Not ABOUT Christ, but CHRIST Himself?

"But ye have not so learned CHRIST..." (Eph. 4.20).

AD

Re: - posted by Nellie, on: 2008/3/15 10:04

Where can I find the Book by T. Austin Sparks?

Thanks
God Bless
Nellie

Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2008/3/15 11:01

You can read it online at www.austin-sparks.net.
I see they have a catalogue, so I think the book can be ordered from them as well.

Or you can order it from:

Emmanuel Church
12000 E 14th St.
Tulsa, OK
74128-5016 USA

Ph: 918-838-1385 or 918-437-7064
FAX: 918-836-5376

Re:, on: 2008/3/15 11:03

EMMANUEL CHURCH, 12000 E.14th St. Tulsa, OK.....74128---5016.....USA.....CAN TRY
TELEPHONE.....918-437-7064.....Faith based....all books are free.....good people. T.A.S. fed me more than any
in deep desert times...overall, I believe he understands the things of the Spirit, as much as any man in the 20th century.
He mentored Watchman Nee, and others. knowing you will grow,,,,,,brothertom

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2012/2/3 18:59

As I was reading Paul West's latest article on mortification as it relates to resting in the Lord I was reminded of this article posted here on SI many years ago. I didn't want to distract from the mortification thread so I thought I would just bump this thread as something to consider along side of that thread. It is a bit of a long read but well worth it...

In Christ,

Ron

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE - posted by ArtB (), on: 2012/2/3 19:14

Excellent Posting anonymous! Many Thanks for sharing on this forum.

Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/2/3 19:34

Dorcas aka Alive-to-God aka Linn,

Her godly presence in SI is missed very much.

Pilgrim

Re: , on: 2012/2/4 5:08

Many thanks Ron for resurrecting this wonderful thread and indeed needed for consideration alongside the mortification threads. The end of the struggle inside is Rest and vital before we can take on the battle without.

Re: - posted by davidc (), on: 2012/2/4 9:53

Dorcas aka Alive-to-God aka Linn,

Her godly presence in SI is missed very much.

Amen Pilgrim, her writings were always inspired and edifying. But I understand that she was banned?????????????

David

Re: RESTING IS THE REQUIRED OBEDIENCE - posted by beloved-vern, on: 2023/1/2 8:52

I found this article this morning and wanted to bump it.